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INTRODUCTION TO CURRICULUM VI--LITERATURE, LANGUAGE, RHETORIC. TEACHER AND STUDENT VERSIONS.

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THIS OVERVIEW OF THE OREGON CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER'S ENGLISH PROGRAM FOR GRADE 12 DEVOTES SEPARATE SECTIONS TO LITERATURE, LANGUAGE, AND RHETORIC. EACH SECTION CONTAINS A REVIEW OF THE EMPHASES, AIMS, AND MATERIAL COVERED IN GRADES 7-11 AND AN INTRODUCTION TO THE GRADE 12 CURRICULUM. THE LITERATURE AND RHETORIC SECTIONS DESCRIBE THE AREAS OF CONSIDERATION AND THE PURPOSE OF EACH 12TH-GRADE UNIT, WHEREAS THE LANGUAGE SECTION CONTAINS A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE YEAR'S LANGUAGE STUDY. BOTH A TEACHER AND A STUDENT VERSION OF THIS INTRODUCTORY GUIDE ARE AVAILABLE. SEE ALSO ED 010 129 THROUGH ED 010 160, ED 010 803 THROUGH ED 010 832, TE 000 195 THROUGH TE 000 220, AND TE 000 227 THROUGH TE 000 249. (RD)

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OREGON CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER

Introduction to Curriculum VI:

Literature
Language
Rhetoric

Teacher Version

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Literature Curriculum VI

Teacher's Introduction

By the end of the 11th grade the students in this curriculum have been exposed to five years of what is essentially formalist criticism. While such an approach has not been our exclusive concern, nonetheless the focus on Subject, Form, and Point of View has tended to put the emphasis on the internal structure of a work--to regard the work of literature as a verbal artifact, an art-form with its own medium and its own techniques. The design of the 11th grade curriculum stressed this approach; in that year the students were exposed to the structural conventions of the various major literary Modes, and to the individual artist's manipulation of those conventions to produce a unique work. If the curriculum has been at all successful, by the end of the 11th grade the student should be familiar with the basic patterns of literary expression and with the basic tools of literary analysis.

So far, so good. Such knowledge and ability is the sine qua non of literary study. But we must remember that not all our students are going on to college for further formal education, and of those who do go on a very small proportion will be English majors. Consequently there is a danger that a curriculum such as we have designed may get too technical and hence fall into a common trap, that of teaching a skill which is exercised (sometimes under duress) in the classroom but which has no vital relationship with any other part of the student's life.

If we are to justify the study of literature in the schools at all, it must be on the grounds that it is at or near the center of humane studies. And while definitions of that phrase may vary, they all include two ideas: first, that humane studies exist as an end in themselves; and second, that they inform our whole character--or, in modern jargon, that they permanently modify our behavior patterns. In other words, if the study of literature stops with the teaching of a skill, it ceases to be a humane study.

The curriculum through the 11th grade has done a good job with the first idea mentioned above. While there is no guarantee that any given student will take up the study of literature as an end in itself, if he chooses to do so he has been provided with the necessary minimum do-it-yourself kit. It is with the desire to avoid the pitfall of stopping at a skill and to give the study of literature some meaning outside the classroom that we have designed the 12th grade curriculum in the way we have.

Whether he picks a book off the shelf in the college bookstore or from the rack in the supermarket, the student is making judgments, and these

judgments are based on his previous experience, his unconscious assumptions about the nature and purpose of literature, and his expectations about what a book will do for him. He has, though he may not realize it, taste, and this taste forms the basis of his judgments. The twelfth grade course is designed to make the student more aware of the fact that he has taste and makes judgments, and to expose him to some basic considerations that go into the formation of taste and the exercise of judgment. Just as there is no guarantee that a student will ever read a book again, neither is there any guarantee that if he does he will choose Marcus Aurelius instead of Mickey Spillane. But he will be more aware that he is making judgments, and he will be more aware of some of the basic judicial criteria; and it is awareness--self-consciousness in the best sense--that distinguishes man from beast and justifies humane studies.

The 12th grade course introduces five questions or considerations which help to form the basis of literary taste and judgment. Students should be familiar with most of them, for it is these considerations with which they have already dealt in much of their response to literature. Some of the considerations, such as that around which the first unit is built, deal with literature as a humane study: we study literature to develop a more accurate perspective of ourselves. Other considerations, such as those at the center of the second and third units, deal with questions of literary communication: what makes literature difficult, and why is something said to be trite? The fourth and fifth units deal with considerations of the effect and purpose of literature--what might be called the ethical considerations of literature: what does it mean to say that literature is inescapably ethical? How, and to what degree, and how sucessfully, is literature didactic?

Let us state here, for re-emphasis later, that the purpose of this year's work is not prescriptive or dictatorial, and that this should be made clear to the students. Our goal is to make them aware that these questions repeatedly arise, that they have to a large extent already formulated tentative answers, and that choices based on these answers are the foundations of literary taste.
The units are long.
No class will be able to deal with all the selections in all the units, and it is not expected that they should. We have made the units large to enable the teacher to go as far as he wishes, and to provide outside reading and exercises for those students who are capable of it. We have built all the units in sections, so that the teacher has as wide a choice as possible without distorting the total intent of the curriculum. Thus the class can deal with but one or two of the sections of a unit, or with a few selections from all the sections, or with all of one unit and parts of another, depending on the ability and taste of the individual class and

teacher. One suggestion: it will achieve the intent of the year's work better if, in adapting to the individual class, the teacher exposes students to all five of the major considerations to at least some extent.

The first consideration is that which results in the old whine so familiar to the ears of the English teacher, "Why do we have to read this old stuff?" By investigation of various older works and comparison with the new, we hope to demonstrate that the old has value in at least two areas. The first is the appeal to consensus. The old is worthwhile because most informed readers have found it worthwhile for a long time. Universal agreement can possibly be wrong, but until one understands the reasons for such agreement, rejection is ignorance.

The other area is of greater significance, perhaps, and almost certainly will have more meaning to the students. Much of the old that has survived is intensely human. By studying the old the students should begin to realize that their problems are not unique, and that there is some continuity to human history and experience. We hope that they will begin to develop some sense of identity, and some sense of their location in time and space and history. Humane studies.

To achieve this goal, we have selected works from both the older and more recent literatures, dealing with timeless themes that should be of some immediate significance to 12th graders. The first section of the unit deals with the inability of youth to conceive of age as ever having been young. We have selected four reminiscent voices: "The Seafarer," a poem from the Anglo-Saxon period; Conrad's Youth, a modern treatment of the same theme; "Retrospect," a poem from the ancient Chinese; and Thomas's "Fern Hill," one of the most moving expressions of remembered childhood in the language.

The second section of the unit deals with the value to an author of the continuity of a common reservoir of reference and allusion. We include three unique treatments of the central episode of the Christian tradition: The Second Shepherd's Play, from the medieval English theatre; Eliot's "Journey of the Magi," which uses the Nativity in a new way and viewed from an unusual angle; and Yeats's "The Second Coming," using the tradition for a frightening prophecy.

The third section deals with a theme related to the first, this time the constant pattern of conflict between parents and children. The Biblical story of David and Absalom is compared to Arthur Miller's All My Sons. Hemingway's "Soldier's Home" is a powerful treatment of the theme, told from a sympathetic point of view towards the returned veteran. To show that such malaise is not exclusive to Western civilization, we include a wry poem from the Chinese, "Putting the Blame on His Sons."

The last section of the unit deals with a broader theme, the old problem of rendering unto Caesar. The conflict between loyalty and conscience is not an exclusive concern of the Twentieth Century, though the Nuremberg and Eichmann trials as well as the draft-card burning incidents in this country make it topical enough. Antigone remains the classic treatment of this problem, and will be paired with a classic modern treatment of the same theme, Darkness at Noon.

The unit, then, is designed to bring the students to as full an awareness as possible of the continuity of human experience, and the enduring value of the classic treatments of these experiences. The intent of the unit is contained in the poem that opens it, Houseman's "On Wenlock Edge." Problems of modern man are not so different from those of the Roman in Uricon.

We have dealt at some length with the first unit, as an illustration of the design and purpose of the units for the 12th grade. Since the individual units each contain considerable introductory material, a rapid survey of the rest of the year's work is all that is required here.

The second unit deals with a consideration which is also a familiar one to the teacher, "Why is so much literature so difficult?" This question, of course, cannot be answered to the satisfaction of everyone, and you will never eliminate entirely the sneaking suspicion that some authors are difficult out of sheer willfulness. Nor do we try to provide the student with "A Reader's Guide to Obscure Authors." The unit deals with some of the main reasons why much literature is difficult to understand. It is difficult because of historical shifts in language, be those shifts denotative, connotative, phonological, orthographical, or what you will. "Sumer Is Icumen In," and other selections. It is difficult because of differences in the culture from which it comes: the assumptions underlying an intensely religious work from an earlier era are quite different from the secular outlook of today. "I Sing of a Maiden" and other selections. Literature is difficult because the author may not make universally understandable the personal connotations of his work. "Sonnet to my Mother." Literature is difficult because, in their search for freshness and immediacy, writers are constantly pushing against the very outer limits of language. To illustrate this, we are providing a selection of modern poetry, thus picking up on this grade level the earlier treatment of 20th Century poetry in grade 10. Literature is difficult because the artist perceives and tries to communicate a highly complex and usually fragmented world. We provide several selections here, culminating in an example of the "theatre of the absurd," Edward Albee's "The Sandbox."

The intent of the unit is not to justify difficulty in literature; it is rather to point out some reasons why much literature is difficult, and to suggest

to the student that taste and judgment are exercised in determining whether the reward has been worth the labor.

The third unit takes the question of freshness and immediacy, and treats it from a different angle. What makes a work trite or hackneyed? This, one of the most important considerations for the students, is also in many ways one of the most difficult to deal with. For considerations of triteness depend to a large extent on a wider experience in reading than many students will possess. How do you know something is trite until you have read a hundred just like it?

The best way to deal with the problem is, we feel, to build on the students' experience with conventions in the 11th grade. They were introduced there to the idea of the author's use of the conventions of a Mode for his own purposes. We hope that here the students will be able to see that conventional plots and situations need not in themselves be trite, but that triteness tends to result when the author becomes the slave of the convention. The study of triteness will also embrace the areas of hackneyed phrases and imagery, and the use of imprecise diction and the "stock response."

This unit uses a device which, though risky, appeared inescapable. For the purposes of comparison we have included trite selections. Thus "Jim Bent, Deserter," the poetry of Edgar Guest, and some earlier versions of Wordsworth's poems are pretty bad stuff. It is best to treat such pedagogical devices with care. Some students may think "Jim Bent, Deserter" is the greatest story ever written. Discussion of its defects will, we hope, sharpen their perception, but it is well to remember that none of us ever entirely loses his taste for cotton candy. The educated palate rejects an exclusive diet of sweets, but does not exclude sweets from the diet.

The fourth unit moves from considerations of the nature of literary expression to the question of what might be called the purpose or effect of literature. What we wish the students to see in this unit is that all literature is inescapably ethical; that it deals with some sort of world view, and that the artist either has or is exploring some system of values or other. If the students can see that the value system implicit in even the most apparently non-didactic works is one of the ways that not only their taste but their own value-system is formed, the year's work will have been a significant success.

Like the other units, this is divided into sections, which can be treated according to the maturity of the class. The unit begins with works dealing with the author's assumption of a simple value-system--Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar," Clough's "Say Not the Struggle Naught Availeth."

From this tacit assumption of a value-system which underlies the work, we move to works, critical in their stance, which also deal with an uncomplicated system: Wordsworth's "The World Is Too much With Us," and Tolstoy's "Three Arshins of Land."

The second section takes up the problems of doubt in and rejection of received values. Thus Tennyson's "O Yet We Trust," Arnold's "Dover Beach," and Hardy's "The Darkling Thrush," are all poems which, though expressing uncertainty, depend on a clearly conceived value-system for their frame of reference. Among the works which attack or re-examine received values we have included Owen's "Dulce et Decorum Est," Jeffers's "The Bloody Sire," and Conrad's "An Outpost of Progress."

The final section deals with a story which is in many respects reminiscent of some of the works studied in Unit One, Melville's "Billy Budd." We see here Melville using the clash of two values as the basis for his story, and writing a complex and disturbing work. Comparison of Captain Vere and his dilemma with the problems faced by Antigone or Rubashov should prove fruitful, and should help reinforce the point of this unit, that literature is inescapably ethical. Either implicitly or directly, it deals with choices and values.

The fifth unit follows logically from the fourth. If literature deals with values, in what ways does it deal with them? We will examine the range of presentation from the most indirect and allusive to the most didactic--from symbol to sermon, as it were. We hope in this unit to have the student see the difference between literature being ethical and literature preaching ethics. We will want them to concern themselves with the question of the persuasive power of literature. Thus they will consider questions of direct and indirect influence in a literary work. How effective is it? How much does it modify our existing values? Was Mayor Jimmy Walker right or wrong when he said that "no girl was ever ruined by a book"?

After treating these five considerations, the curriculum offers a concluding unit, designed to bring to a focus all that the students have learned in their six years of study. It will deal with the Shakespeare play selected for this year, Hamlet. In essence, it tells the students, "After six years of formal literary study, you should be able to deal intelligently with a highly complex work. Here is Hamlet, one of the greatest works by the greatest writer in English. Have at it."

Thus, the 12th grade work in literature. It provides a logical and necessary final step in the curriculum we have designed. It comes at the end of five years' concern with the internal workings of the discipline.

It attempts to take that discipline and look outward, making connections between literature and other areas of human thought and endeavor. The five main considerations of this year's work are obviously not the only ones available, and a case could well be made for the selection of five others. But the ones we have selected cover quite a range: in dealing with the continuity of human experience, with questions of taste, with the purpose and effect of literature, we hope to make literature a part of the students' total experience.

INTRODUCTION TO THE TEACHER

LANGUAGE VI

Language VI consists of the work for the final year in a six-year sequential language curriculum. It might be well to summarize the material that has been covered in the previous years and especially to reiterate some of the aims and assumptions which have shaped the curriculum, so that you will know what to expect of your students.

The first aim has been to give the student a feeling that language is a living developing aspect of human existence, so vital to human existence and so intricately related to the thinking process that it is worth studying for its own sake, not just as a tool for some other purpose. There is little evidence, at this time, that a knowledge of what constitutes language has any effect on other parts of the English curriculum. A more precise knowledge may some day open up such relationships, but the language curriculum we are working with here has not made that assumption. We have made the assumption that children can be interested in a study of language for its own sake if it is shown to be related to their own existence and if they understand they are analyzing their own behavior.

Modern linguistic science has provided us with tools and knowledge for studying language scientifically and precisely. But like any scientific study, all of the answers are not known. There is a great deal more known about language now than fifty years ago, but linguistic science is a relatively new science and has a long way to go. Moreover, language is one of the most complex aspects of human existence and not easily explained. However, just as the quest for new knowledge is what leads to new answers in all sciences, so does it in linguistics. We hope that student and teacher alike will understand that it is not necessary to have an answer for every problem in language in order to study it in some depth. There is much that we do know which already can explain aspects of language which earlier approaches could not explain. We have not been interested in giving students only a body of knowledge about the structure of sentences and the names of the various parts, but in giving them a more precise knowledge of structure in order to find explanations about language itself. No matter how much your student has learned about the formal analysis of a sentence, we hope that his work with the language of this curriculum has at least resulted in the attitude that language study in its own right can be an interesting pursuit.

In each year of the language curriculum there have been two main types of material: 1) grammar and 2) related language material of some sort. The grammar units have developed a partial transformational grammar of English based on the system of analysis developed by Noam Chomsky and his followers. This system has been used because it represents in our opinion the best thinking of modern language scientists so far and because it goes farther than any previous system in offering an explanation of the language. The theory upon which this grammar is based is that language can best be described as consisting of a base structure which can be specified by means of rewrite (phrase structure) rules and by transformations which change the base structure

into the sentences of the language. The criterion for writing the rules is simplicity and economy. The rewrite rules show how the elements of the sentence are related. Some are more closely related than others. For instance, a determiner is more closely related to its noun than to a verb. Thus a rewrite rule says that one element, say a noun phrase (NP) consists of a determiner and a noun (NP $\longrightarrow$ T + N). Rewrite rules break large constituents down into smaller. They analyze the base structure.

Transformations, on the other hand, operate on the base structure in order to change it into surface structure, the sentences we actually utter. Instead of saying one symbol can be rewritten as something else, they say that if in the base structure a certain string of elements of a certain kind exists, it can be changed in a specific way into another kind of string. Thus a string of the form NP^1 + Aux + Vtr + NP^2 can be transformed into NP^2 + Aux + be + en + Vt + by + NP^1. In other words, a sentence with a transitive verb can be made passive. This is a fact of language. The rule describes it.

The seventh grade grammar was concerned exclusively with phrase structure rules and with developing notions of what is meant by grammaticality and base structure. The eighth grade added some elements to the phrase structure rules but was chiefly concerned with introducing the notion of transformations. The ninth and tenth grades both expanded the phrase structure rules and added other transformations, so that by the end of the tenth grade the student should have a fair knowledge of a good many of the various sentence types of English. The specific material for each grade is described in greater detail in the Introduction to the Language Curriculum, Grades 7-12. You will probably want to reread that description.

Beginning with Language V (designed for grade eleven) the emphasis shifted from adding rules to the grammar to asking what the rules meant and something about the nature of language itself. Transformational grammar offers some answers to such questions as the relation between deep and surface structure, the meaning of ambiguity, the reason for recursiveness in language. These questions are dealt with in the units of the second half of the eleventh grade.

The related language material is chiefly historical in each year, though the introductory unit of the first year is concerned with establishing an understanding of the fact that language changes and that it varies according to place, time, and circumstance. Dialects are discussed in this connection. Thereafter, various aspects of the historical development of English are treated--the history of writing systems and the kind of English used in Shakespeare's time. The student's knowledge of grammatical analysis and the terminology developed in the grammar are used whenever possible.

Language VI is devoted entirely to related language material rather than to grammatical analysis. If the student has had the benefit of the first five years of the curriculum he should come equipped with the tools for handling the related materials in a mature and more than superficial way. The big unit is the history unit which deals with the history of English before

Shakespeare. It is in two parts, one dealing with the external historical events that influenced the development of English, and one dealing with the actual changes that have taken place. The first part may have been taught to some of your students in the eleventh grade, but chances are that it hasn't. Even if it has, it could be briefly reviewed before proceeding to the second part.

Whereas the analysis of Modern English is facilitated because there are speakers available who have an intuition about their language and know when a sentence is grammatical or not, the analysis of an earlier period of English is made very difficult because there are only written records, which may be incomplete and which, in any event, offer little help as to whether sentences may be deviant or not. Because the student has no internalized way of knowing about how early English was pronounced, spelled, or constructed,, most of the history unit for this year is presented as pure exposition, though the review of basic concepts and the part on the grammar of Old and Middle English is presented inductively, and there are many questions provided for class discussion. The important concept to be gained from the unit is that there has been a process of orderly change, and that our language today is the result of what has gone before. The final section is concerned with the method which scholars have evolved in order to piece together the evidence and draw conclusions about the prehistory of families of languages.

The other three units for this year represent an attempt--purely experimental--to make use of some of the knowledge of the structure of the language in discussing some aspects of related fields. It is assumed that the student is ready to discuss usage and that his previous knowledge will enable him to see it in its proper perspective--not as a matter of right and wrong, but as a matter of appropriateness. It should also help him see that usage problems occur at the lowest level of grammatical analysis. They involve, for the most part, lexical choices and they constitute a relative small part of the total language output of any person. The student should know that usage is important, but he should also know why. He should know it isn't a moral matter.

As we have said before, what light a knowledge of linguistics can throw on how people write is a question mark. But it isn't necessary to justify language study on the grounds that it makes better writers. However, a precise knowledge of the structure of the language may give us some tools to talk about various aspects of writing. The last two units of this year attempt to do this. One unit discusses the use of metaphor in the context of how metaphor breaks grammatical restraints. A knowledge of what is meant by grammaticality gives us some way into the problem. The last unit attempts to point out some things about the style of some selected authors in terms of the kind of transformations they seem to make use of. Admittedly we do not know how successful these units will be. We are anxious to have them tried honestly and are anxious for the reactions of students and teachers.

NOTE: In the school year 1966-67 twelfth grade teachers will be working under a certain handicap in trying out the material of Language VI. In the first place, it is built on the material of previous years. It will be difficult, if not impossible, to use it if your students have no knowledge of the

principles of transformational grammar and the kind of analysis it makes use of, though the usage unit could presumably be taught and some of the history.

In the second place you will probably have students who have had varying amounts of the material of the previous years. The 1964-65 school year was the first year that the language material was given a full trial. The students in the seventh grade who started it then are now ninth graders. However, some senior high teachers taught some of the grammar in their high school classes. Therefore, you may have students who have had a good deal or a little. Yours will be a job of finding out what they know and then of adapting. In years after this one the problem should be less.

Teacher's Introduction

Rhetoric Curriculum VI

In grades seven to eleven, the rhetoric curriculum has been guided by two not necessarily harmonious ideas: First, we have assumed, with Bruner, that the skills required to function within a subject at advanced levels must be learned in simpler form at the elementary levels. Thus we have said, and our curriculum in the seventh and eighth grades bears this out, that rhetoric, the art--or at least the skill--of communicating effectively in language, must be grasped whole by the beginning writer as well as by the polished professional. To be sure, we expect only a rudimentary performance from the seventh grader, but we do believe that it makes sense to expose him to the total rhetorical art and its main components from the very beginning. This concept of unity, expressed in Bruner's metaphor of the spiral, has been one of our theoretical mainstays.

The other idea has been a nagging sense that any concept of unity, in such an enormously complex task as composing, is simplistic if that task does not somehow yield itself to the sort of fragmentation which the complexity of the subject inexorably demands. In plainer words, we have found ourselves in the position of every teacher who has honestly tried to teach effective communication: we have had to try to teach our students how to think. And as we have done this, we have seen our neat, tidy spiral exploded into dozens of irrelevant relevancies. Instead of the homely triad of subject, structure, and style into which the seventh and eighth grade rhetoric work is so comfortably pigeonholed, we found ourselves, in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades, pursuing the ungraspable phantom of clear thinking through emphasis, process, imagined point of view, semantics, generalization, qualification and support, metaphor and analogy, deductive reasoning, plausibility, opinion-discovery, audience analysis, methods of support, and elementary research. Now, pale and shaken, with only a pious hope that whoso loses his life for rhetoric's sake shall find it, we face the twelfth grade.

Whether we have really reached the Bower of Bliss or are still foundering in Error's Cave we can't say. However, we in the rhetoric curriculum are sure of a few things: that one cannot make an omelet without breaking eggs, that one can never really understand the unity of a subject until he has participated in its fragmentation, and that a fugitive and cloistered rhetoric, which turns away from the pursuit of complexity just because it is complex--and hence demanding--is simply not worth bothering with. Whether thinking can be taught or not may be debatable, but not so far as we are concerned. If it cannot, we should have shut up shop long ago, after having produced a short

list of rules for spelling and punctuation, and a few cautions on troublesome points of usage.

So we have, at times, skated on thin ice rather than not skate at all. Recognizing that one can speak or write no better than one thinks, we have tried to foster certain habits of the mind which accompany clearer more effective thinking. We have attempted to encourage the student, his habits of observation, imagination, and discrimination. We have tried to lead him through some of the infinity of choices which are at the heart of all memorable writing or speech. We have, in short, fragmented him.

Now, in the twelfth grade, we intend to put him back together again. And this time, hopefully, Humpty Dumpty will be better than he was before. He may be more than the sum of his parts.

In returning to the notion of unity, we have chosen the word "style," from our original trinity, as the keystone for our rhetoric plans for the final year. As the keystone, the topmost and last placed stone in the arch, completes it and locks its separate part into place, so we hope that this fetching term, style, and the considerations which inhere within it, will lock the separate elements of the rhetorical sequence together into a final unity.

Part of the reason that style is an attractive word to us is that it is so metaphysical, so removed from objective referents. Style, as someone has said, is everything and it is nothing. Narrowly conceived, it may be considered as merely the details of a writer's words and sentences and the patterns of these details. Widely conceived, it culminates in something like Buffon's lofty pronouncement that "style is the man." Actually, both conceptions suit our purposes in the twelfth grade, and the term's ambiguity, for once, makes it all the more useful to us.

After an introductory orientation unit which attempts to crystallize the notion of rhetoric that we have been working toward in grades seven to eleven, the twelfth grade exploration of style begins with a unit entitled "The Personal Voice." It is an inductive pursuit of the largest aspects of style, the notion that the style is, as Mencken says "the outward and visible symbol of a man." We hope to lead the student to see that not only professional writers have style, but that the student whose writing, or speech, or personal characteristics distinguish him from his fellows, possesses style. We want him not merely to be able to identify distinctive and admirable traits of style in others, but to seek out and nurture these qualities in himself and to sharpen and "personalize" the speaking voice that comes out of his oral and written compositions.

This unit, "The Personal Voice," is constructed around a Commonplace Book. Less intimate than a diary, the Commonplace Book, as Stephen Leacock defines it, is the sort of notebook. From How to Write by Stephen Leacock

> in which one writes all kinds of random attempts at expression. If you have just read a book write a few words down about it. If a moving picture has deeply moved you, write down the fact and try to explain why. Cultivate admiration of other peoples' words and phrases that seem to express much, and write them down.

The Commonplace Book can be composed of a large number of entries, including description, reflection, judgment and opinion, memory, fancy, reading, intellectual commentary, quotation, epigram, and aphorism. We call the Commonplace Book "ideas in hibernation"; and attempt to show how entries can be drawn forth and expanded into rhetorical assignments. At the same time, students are studying the genre of the personal essay and the "speaking voice" that comes to us from polished essayists like Leacock, Wouk, and Orwell. Among other things, the students will work backward to construct in their own books hypothetical entries for the essays studied. (i.e., what might Orwell have had in "his Commonplace Book" that could have led to this essay?) The idea of these and other assignments in the unit is to combine invention, imitation, and analysis by students to produce a clearer awareness of and ability to express their own personal style.

From the expansive, generalized treatment of style in Unit II we turn, in Unit III, to a treatment of style in its smaller and more specific forms. Now we want the student to see that style, although it may be the man himself, inevitably comes down to the very smallest elements of the sentence, to words and arrangement of words. Where before the student concentrated upon essays, now he will concentrate upon paragraphs and sentences, attempting to account for the sorts of minute word-by-word and phrase-by-phrase choices which a writer makes. He will be introduced to the verifiable, quantitative aspects of style. He will see that words like "terse," "masculine," and "flowing," when applied to style are really without any sort of objective correlative unless one can be found in the words and word-combinations themselves. Working this closely with stylistic elements gives us a chance to introduce such matters as sentence structure, coordination and subordination, parallelism, balance, antithesis, concreteness, jargon, cliché, metaphorical language, and other more advanced rhetorical aspects. Although there is a good deal of stylistic analysis throughout the unit, the activity is not undertaken as an end in itself but as a way of making the student more aware of the effective words, phrases, and sentences of skillful writers, and as a means of

encouraging him to break out of his shell of stereotyped responses and dull, repetitious patterns of syntax. We lean lightly on the grammarians for some of our vocabulary but beyond that, our aims and concerns are rhetorically motivated.

The final unit will attempt to show how stylistic and rhetorical considerations open out onto the field of literature, just as the preceding unit narrowed these considerations down almost to the province of grammar. Now we hope to show the interrelatedness of style and meaning in imaginative works, and, further, to help the student see that larger rhetorical considerations pervade even the supposedly purely artistic concerns of the novel, the story, the drama, and even the poem. Such forms as satire and allegory will lend themselves particularly well to this treatment. Our theoretical starting point is Wayne Booth's The Rhetoric of Fiction, from which we extract a few basic principles suitable for exploration with high school seniors. What we are anxious to have our students see is, of course, that rhetorical considerations function in literature as they do in the non-storied forms: that is, as evidence of the writer's search for an effective point of contact with his readers, his audience. "Style is ingratiation," in Kenneth Burke's words, and presumably this is true of a sonnet as well as a slogan.

We hope, then, that this turn toward unity in the twelfth grade rhetoric curriculum will not be seen as a narrowing of the meaning of effective communication, but as a natural, organic return to equilibrium for the student and as a widening of his understanding of rhetoric within the larger discipline of English.

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Introduction to Curriculum VI:

Literature
Language
Rhetoric

Student Version

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The project reported herein was supported through the Cooperative Research Program of the Office of Education, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

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LITERATURE CURRICULUM VI

Student Introduction

If you have been studying this curriculum for the last five years, you know a great deal about literary analysis--probably more than you think you know. As an experiment, we are going to ask you to consider a poem which you read last year, Archibald MacLeish's "The End of the World" (Immortal Poems, p. 550). We have picked a poem because it is short and can be grasped entire. Bring to bear on your reading of this poem everything you have learned in the last five years about Subject, Form, and Point of View. Read and think about it for at least fifteen minutes by the classroom clock, before you turn the page.

Time. Now go back and read the poem again. Think about it.

Discuss the poem in class, dealing with the following considerations, among others.

- Is the poet making any use of the conventions of a particular Genre? If so, what are they? How does he use them? What can you say about the contribution of Form to Subject?

- What is the Subject? How do you know? In terms of what you think the subject is, is there any symbolic significance to the setting of a big circus tent?

- What are the uses of imagery in such words as "pointed" and "starless dark"? More subtly, what kind of a verb is "cancelled"? What are the implications of "cancelled skies"?

- What is the effect of the repetition of "there" and "nothing"?

- What is the author's point of view toward his subject? How do you know?

- For an armless man to be able to light a match with his toes is a monumental achievement in overcoming a handicap. Is there any irony in the man's occupation? If so, how does this contribute to the theme?

- Can you give a formal description of the rhyme scheme and meter? Of the verse form?

So much for review. If the work of the previous years has been successful at all, the preceding exercise should have resulted in an intelligent class discussion of MacLeish's poem in terms of Subject, Form, and Point of View. This is not to say that we expected you to know all the answers to all the questions, or that you are supposed now to be professional literary critics, or that you have no more to learn about literary analysis or criticism. But we do hope that the exercise has demonstrated to you your ability to deal intelligently with a literary work. You should be able to discuss with some authority the internal structure of a work of literature, and to relate it to other works in the same Mode and Genre.

Such an ability is essential to any worthwhile discussion of some of the broader questions of literary study: that is why so much of the curriculum has been spent in helping you acquire it. This year's course assumes that you have (at least to some extent) this ability, and goes on from there to consider other questions.

Speaking generally, the questions we will deal with this year all involve the problem of literary taste, judgments, and values. In a way, the

previous five years have been designed to give you sufficient knowledge to handle such questions intelligently and meaningfully. Think again of "The End of the World." Is it any good? Does MacLeish make a fresh use of the sonnet form? Do you think he is deliberately being difficult in expressing himself in this way? What rewards can you expect to get from studying a poem, either old or new? What value does MacLeish place on civilization, if he implies that it can best be conceived as a circus? Do you think he is right?

What this year's course is designed to do, then, is to help you make intelligent evaluations of literary works. In a way, the course will merely serve to make you more conscious of things you already do. For, consciously or not, you already have exercised your ability to make literary judgments. You either liked or did not like "The End of the World." Every time you choose one book over another, you are making decisions and choices based on your system of taste and judgment. So what we are doing this year is trying to make you more aware of processes already going on, and more aware of some of the fundamental questions which form the individual's taste and govern his judgments.

Note the word "individual" in the last sentence. It is important. It implies that in the final analysis taste is a subjective thing, which it is. It further implies that an individual's taste cannot be dictated or prescribed which is true. But it is also true that the more you know about something, and the more aware you are of other ideas on a subject, the more informed and valid your own taste is liable to be.

Thus this year's work does not tell you to "like" MacLeish and "dislike" Jones--a literature course is not a commercial for Brand X. It does not provide you with hard and fast answers to all the questions it raises--a literature course is not a catechism. It does not provide you with a handy list of authors and works laid out on a scale from good to bad--a literature course is not a form chart. It does, however, invite you to exercise your own taste, to make your own judgments, and to do your own thinking. It does <u>not</u> prescribe a set of critical commandments; it <u>does</u> invite you to increase your understanding.

The course is arranged in six units. The first five deal with questions which, depending on how you answer them, have a great deal to do with taste and judgement; the sixth is a summary unit.

The five questions we consider are not the only ones that can be asked about literary taste, but they are representative questions from several angles of approach to literature. The first unit deals with the question of literary history as one of the approaches: it examines possible answers to the query posed again and again by students: "Why do we have to read this <u>old</u> stuff?" And it is a good question. What is the relevance today of a book written two thousand years ago? What have Shakespeare or Sophocles to do with contemporary civilization? This unit, then, deals with a problem

that critics have argued for a long time, the problem of the values and rewards of studying literature. To help you understand the problem and some of the answers that are usually given, we will ask you to read old and modern works which deal with similar sorts of problems. Next to Sophocles's Antigone, a Greek tragedy some twenty five hundred years old, we will place Arthur Koestler's Darkness at Noon, a twentieth century novel dealing with the communist purges in Russia in the late 1930's. Next to the story from the Old Testament of David and Absalom we will put a play, All My Sons, by Arthur Miller, who is still living. We will ask you to consider a medieval work dealing with the Nativity and compare it with a poem dealing with the same theme written by T. S. Eliot, a modern poet. Thus you will have an opportunity to deal with the problem of reading the old by comparing it with the new.

Units Two and Three take a different approach. They are concerned with specific problems of literary judgment rather than with the value of studying literature. Unit Two deals with a question that also frequently occurs, "Why is so much literature so difficult?" You will look at some selections designed to show some of the reasons for difficulty in a literary work, from the historical shift in the meanings of words to the artist's vision of a difficult world. We hope to show you some answers to such questions as Why is so much literature hard to read? Why doesn't the author just come out and say what he means? You will read a modern play by Edward Albee, some medieval lyrics, and other stories and poems illustrating the various kinds of difficulty one encounters in reading. Again, the final answer will be up to you, and will involve your individual taste and judgment: is the reward you get from wrestling with a difficult work worth the effort involved? You decide.

Unit Three continues with specific problems of literary judgment, dealing with what is probably the most subjective question of all, one which people are probably answering when they say "This was good," or "That was bad." What makes one work trite or dull and another fresh and interesting? Obviously this is a question to which there are no absolute answers: what's dull to you may sometimes be great to the next person. But there are some common grounds of agreement among most readers for judging a work. These common grounds will be explored, from the use of individual words and phrases to the use of major structural patterns. We will show you some poetry and fiction that most people consider pretty bad, and then we will compare it with some things that most people consider pretty good. Again, it should be emphasized that we are not dictating your choice. If you decide that "Jim Bent, Deserter" is a better story than "Flight," feel free to do so. If you like Edgar Guest better than John Milton, fine. What we will show you in this unit is those qualities which informed readers look for which make them tend to rate one poem or story above another. We will show you some of the criteria by which people judge a work, and ask you to decide whether the criteria are valid or not.

Units Four and Five deal with still another approach to the problem of literary evaluation, the consideration of what might be called the ends

or the purpose of literature. Unit Four examines the proposition that most literature deals with or explores or assumes some system of values. This is definitely NOT to say that literature always preaches ethics or has a moral, but it is to say that underlying most literature is some system of ethical or moral values. We will examine various works which in a simple or a complex way deal with values. Some, like "Crossing the Bar," assumes a belief in a larger meaning in life. Other works deal with the questioning of assumed values, such as "The Darkling Thrush" or "The Saint." We will close by reading one of the masterpieces of American literature, Melville's "Billy Budd," in which two value systems, each valid, come into direct and insoluble conflict. The purpose of the unit is to help you understand how value systems underlie a literary work, and how our own values may be shaped by what we read.

The fifth unit considers what might be called the persuasive power of literature. If literature is concerned with values in some way, what are the ways in which these values are presented? We will explore the range from the most direct statement to the most indirect and allusive. We will consider also the question of how persuasive literature is: how much does it modify our behavior, how much and in what way does it influence our own values? Such questions about the purpose and effect of literature quite obviously are factors in determining our literary tastes and judgments.

At the end of these five units we hope that you will be more aware of some of the questions and possible answers that underlie your evaluation of a given literary work; and that your ability to make intelligent judgments, based on a broader understanding of the history, complexity, and purpose of literature will be sharpened.

The year's work closes with a sixth unit, in which you will read Hamlet. You will have had six years of formal literary education, dealing with many different approaches to literature; you will have had experience in forming your own literary judgments. We are taking one of the most enduring works in the English language--what is probably the best-known play by certainly the greatest writer in English--and turning it over to you to read and judge. It will give you an opportunity to exercise all the skills and taste that you have acquired, and will offer a real challenge to your critical abilities.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDENT

LANGUAGE VI

As you begin your final year of language study in high school, it will be convenient to take a look back and a look ahead--to review some of the most important things you have discovered about the English language and to outline briefly what you can expect to be doing this year. Probably the most important discovery you have made in your study of language is that though language is a tremendously complex part of human activity, it is orderly and systematic and can therefore be described by a system of rules. It can be studied in a scientific and precise way. Because it is such an important part of being human, it deserves to be studied in this way. Language gives us clues about what goes on in our minds, about how we think. The more we know about language the more we know about one of the things that makes us human.

There are many aspects of language. One that your language courses for the last few years have been especially concerned with is the structure of the sentence, because that seems to be the basis for talking about other aspects of language. By this time you have learned many of the rules which explain (or account for) English sentences. That is, you know a good deal about English <u>grammar</u>. By grammar, of course, we mean a description of the structure of the sentences of our language. There are many structures in English sentences which you have not analyzed, but you have learned a system of analysis which, if you had sufficient time, could help you discover much more about that highly complex thing called "the English sentence."

Because language is so complex, it seems amazing that children can learn it so quickly. As a native speaker of English, you had already learned how to apply many of the rules that produce English sentences even before you started to school, though you almost certainly were not aware that you were applying them. Nor could you explain or describe those rules of sentence making that you were applying every time you said anything. But even at the age of six, you were able to produce a great number of grammatical English sentences--sentences that may never have been spoken before. Our study of grammar has been an attempt to bring to the surface and to state in the form of rules those principles of sentence formation that you acquired very early in life. By discovering these principles you may have discovered something about how it is possible to learn a language. You have learned something about the system. For instance, you have learned that a sentence has a basic structure which can be described by phrase structure rules. You have learned also that this base structure can be changed by means of transformations into what is called surface structure, the actual sentences of the language. You have learned that this means of describing sentences explains a great deal about our language and how we understand it.

In your study of grammar you have not been asked to learn a simple definition of the term <u>sentence</u>. The reason for this is clear: every rule that

you have discovered is simply one further step in a complete definition of the English sentence. There is no simple way to define a concept as complex as "sentence in English." The set of rules which make up the grammar of English are, in effect, the best definition that we can produce. Similarly, you have been given no simple definition of the term language, even though the contents of the entire language curriculum are based upon an interpretation of what the term language means. The reason for offering no definition is the same as the one given above: a simple definition is nearly useless, and an adequate definition would include a full description of all the several sub-systems of language. You have studied a fairly large sample of the rules governing the relationships among words and groups of words in English sentences--usually called syntax, but we realize that language is more than just syntax. You have studied the sounds of English--phonology--but language is more than just the spoken sounds. You have learned about various systems that man has invented for representing some of the spoken languages of the world--that is, writing systems, but language is more than just the visible marks used to represent it. You have studied the meanings of words and how these meanings change, but language is more than just the sum total of the meanings of all the words in a lexicon. Language is all of these things and how they are related, and more besides.

But even though you haven't acquired a simple definition of language you should have arrived at an understanding of what language is, what its various aspects are, so that you can, for instance, tell the difference between structure and meaning. You should also have come to realize that language is a living thing which evolves and changes as other aspects of life do. It varies with time and place. It is tied up with the history and development of the human race and has a history of its own. You have learned something of what English was like in the time of Shakespeare. This year you will be spending a good deal of time going farther back into history to discover what your language was like six hundred to a thousand years ago. This is the first language unit of the year. Your knowledge of the structure of Modern English will help you see how English a thousand years ago was different. But you will also see how it gradually changed, becoming finally your own twentieth century English.

In Language VI you will not be concerned with any further formal study of the structure of the English sentence. In other words you will not this year be analyzing sentences and developing further rules of the grammar. The assumption is that you have a good understanding of this structure and that you can draw on this knowledge in talking about other aspects.[1] For instance, your knowledge of base structure and surface structure of sentences will help you understand exactly what is mean by usage.

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[1]If it becomes necessary for you to review some of the parts of the grammar, your teacher can provide material to help you.

Many people think that all there is to the study of language is to learn the difference between the right way to say things and the wrong way. You know that this is not true. You know that grammar is a very complex activity and that native speakers of a language know the difference between a grammatical sentence and one that is not. It has nothing to do with correctness. On the other hand, certain lexical choices (the actual words of the language) which are made at the very end of the analysis of a sentence are controversial. It is important in many situations to know the difference between one form and another. Also, some perfect grammatical structures are inappropriate in certain social contexts. You will have a unit this year which is devoted to these very problems.

Linguists are, of course, language scientists. They are concerned with describing as accurately as possible all the aspects of language and with discovering their relation. They are hopeful that an exact knowledge of language will help us to understand some things about the way language is used, for instance the way in which certain authors write. But as yet they do not know a great deal about it. The study of language is one thing. The study of literature is another. How they are related, or if they are, we don't really know. However, our knowledge of structure may help us talk about some things found in literature. Our knowledge of a grammatical English sentence may help us say more precisely what a <u>metaphor</u> is, for instance. The use of metaphor, as you know, is an important literary device. We can talk about some metaphors in terms of their relation to the grammar of the language. Later this year you will have a unit which does this.

And finally, you know that surface structure is related to the deep base structure of the sentences of the language by means of transformations. An interesting question is whether or not a person makes use of one kind of transformation more than others. Is there a certain pattern of transformations which an author is inclined to use? And is there any relation to this use and to his style of writing? This question will be discussed in another unit, the last unit of the year.

As you can see, the work planned for you this year is different in some ways from the language material you have studied in previous years. Instead of advancing your knowledge of the structure of the sentence, it draws upon the knowledge you already have in order to talk about some related aspects of language. The assumption is that you now have the equipment to think about these other aspects.

Student's Introduction

Rhetoric Curriculum VI

The beginning of the twelfth grade is a good time to look back as well as ahead. A backward glance at the rhetoric curriculum will reveal some facts which you have probably noticed yourself while working with the rhetoric assignments of previous years.

First, good writing is hard work. There isn't any way around this fact. It takes a lot of scribbling and crossing out and pencil-chewing to get a good sentence down on paper. And writing is as difficult for most professional writers as it is for the student. As Oscar Wilde, the novelist and dramatist, once said, on being asked how he had spent his day, "I spent the morning putting in a comma, and the afternoon taking it out." So we can't promise you that the twelfth grade will see you churning out words, sixty to the minute, like some kind of teletype machine. Writing will continue to be hard work, because the more you learn about writing the more you find you don't know. But you do make progress. The elementary problems which once baffled you are no longer troublesome. Now, the choices which trouble you are considerably more complex and sophisticated.

Second, rhetoric, or the art of communicating effectively in language, is a unified art. A has something he wants to say to B, and he wants to say it as effectively as he can, for his purposes. Everything which we have studied boils down to this elemental situation. And so, from the beginning, you have been exposed to the total rhetorical act. Naturally, in the early years, you were not asked to think very deeply about this act, and the emphasis then was on the more basic aspects of rhetoric. But nevertheless you were asked to see that all the pieces of rhetoric went together to form one whole idea: effective communication.

Third, the only way that one can systematically learn a difficult subject like rhetoric is to break it up into its component parts, and then study these parts, one by one. Since rhetoric is so much a matter of straight thinking, one learns it only by studying ways to think clearly, and ways to avoid thinking unclearly.

Now it may occur to you that there is a hostility between points two and three. How can one believe in the unity of rhetoric if he is busily making fragments out of it? There is a paradox here, but it is one that we have to learn to live with. Rhetoric is simply unlearnable unless we take it apart. We may agree that there is a unity to rhetoric, but having done so, we cannot just sit back and congratulate ourselves for a job well-done. This gets us nowhere. So you have been asked to study all the parts of rhetoric, and these parts have turned out to be the methods of clear thinking. Thus, you have, many of you, studied means of giving emphasis to your ideas, you have learned how to describe a process, you have learned something about semantics, or the study of how words mean, you have found how to arrive at, and qualify, and support a generalization or an opinion, how to reason deductively and inductively, how to analyze your audience, how to practice elementary research, and so on. In short, you have learned a great deal about all the pieces that make up the whole of rhetoric.

Now, in the twelfth grade, it is time to "pull yourself together" again. Correspondingly, it makes sense that the last year of the rhetoric curriculum should emphasize once more the notion of unity. This final year, then, should see you better able than ever before to function effectively as a writer or speaker; but your effectiveness is due in large part to the time you have spent in studying the fragmented parts of rhetoric.

What to Expect

The key idea in the twelfth grade rhetoric curriculum is style. All of the units will be concerned to some degree with this feature of communication. Style is a very tricky idea. Our notion of a person's style can be based on a great deal of actual evidence, or it can be based on almost no actual evidence. You can think of style as the choices of words, phrases, and sentences peculiar to a particular writer, or you can think of it as a vague "feeling" that you get when reading or listening to someone. In the twelfth grade, we will study both aspects of style. On a unit called "The Personal Voice," you will work with the latter concept of style, the idea that style is, as H. L. Mencken says, "the outward and visible symbol of a man." You will see that not just professional writers have a style, but that you, or any of your fellow students whose writing, or speech, or personal qualities distinguish him from his classmates, have style. You will be studying and analyzing distinctive and admirable traits of style in others, and will also by keeping a sort of diary or journal called a "Commonplace Book," come to a clearer understanding and expression of your own personal style.

In the next unit, you will be looking hard at style as the specific choices of words and structures that a writer makes. Instead of the larger notion of style as the man, you will see that style really comes down to the smallest elements of the sentence. Here is style which can be counted and verified; it can thus be talked about in very concrete terms. Although you will learn something about analyzing style here, the emphasis is, as it was in the preceding unit, on learning newer and more effective ways to express yourself.

The last unit of the twelfth grade will try to show you how style and rhetoric operate in literature. It may have occurred to you in the past that something you learned in a geometry class seemed related to something learned in English. The realization that all learning is interrelated is an important one, and you will see in this final unit that rhetoric and literature are not isolated subjects, but that rhetoric functions in literature as it does in non-imaginative writing. Obviously a person who is interested in effective communication with an audience (which is what rhetoric means) will be interested in it whether he is writing a poem or a political speech.

There is one other rhetoric unit in the twelfth grade, somewhat different from the other three. It is the opening unit for the year, and is designed to make you stop and take stock of what you know about rhetoric, and of what rhetoric really is. It is an important unit for giving you your bearings for the rest of the year's work.

With this return to unity in the twelfth grade, you should find yourself at the end of the year having a good understanding of the scope and meaning of rhetoric, and possessing the necessary background to meet the more sophisticated rhetorical challenges which will come to you as you continue to mature and to learn.